



Health Equity Task Force

November 18, 2020 Meeting

Welcome

This is the ninth meeting of the legislative task force established by Chapter 93 of the Acts of 2020 (referred to as the “Health Equity Task Force”) to study and make recommendations to the General Court that address health disparities for underserved or underrepresented populations based on culture, race, ethnicity, language, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, geographic location, including, but not limited to, gateway cities with hospitals dedicated to caring for patients who test positive for COVID-19, and age in the commonwealth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health Equity Task Force Members

Senate Appointees

Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz

Senator Julian Cyr

Task Force Co-Chair, Michael Curry, Esq., Deputy CEO and General Counsel at Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers

Dr. Milagros Abreu, Executive Director, President and Founder of The Latino Health Insurance Program

Dr. Cassandra Pierre, infectious diseases physician and Assistant Professor of Medicine at Boston University

Dr. Frank Robinson, Vice President, Public Health and Community Relations, Baystate Health

Hirak Shah, Legal Counsel for Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr

House Appointees

Representative Chynah Tyler

Representative José F. Tosado

Task Force Co-Chair, Dr. Assaad Sayah, CEO, Cambridge Health Alliance; Commissioner of Public Health, City of Cambridge; Assistant Professor, Harvard Medical School

Dr. Kiame Mahaniah, CEO, Lynn Community Health Center

Dr. Myechia Minter-Jordan, President & CEO, DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement and Catalyst Institute

Jeffrey Sanchez, Lecturer, Center for Public Health Leadership, TH Chan School of Public Health; Senior Advisor, Rasky Partners

Beverly Stables, Health Care Policy Analyst for House Minority Leader Bradley H. Jones, Jr.

Chair of the MA Black and Latino Legislative Caucus

Representative Carlos González

Chair of the MA Asian-American Legislative Caucus

Representative Donald H. Wong

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions of Task Force Members & Approval of October 28 Meeting Minutes
2. Presentation and Dialogue with National Academy for State Health Policy
3. A. Announcement re: November 16 MA Attorney General's "Building Toward Racial Justice and Equity in Health: A Call to Action" Web-Event/Report
B. Discuss Updates relative to Filed Interim Report & the State Budget/Policy Process this Fall
4. Discussion of Next Steps

Presentation and Dialogue

Snapshot of State-led
Directions in Health Equity

Jill Rosenthal
Senior Program Director,
National Academy for
State Health Policy

www.nashp.org

Reflections and Areas to Explore Further from the NASHP Presentation

What areas are of interest to Task Force Members for Further Exploration?

- For discussion and input, below are some topics from today's NASHP presentation for potential exploration and consideration.
- Structural Equity Steps in State Government: Cabinet-level Equity Officers, Multi-Disciplinary “Whole of Government” Approaches
- Health Equity Zones
- Community Engagement, Partnership, and Funding
- Data Collection and Reporting to Identify, Monitor, and Chart Progress on Health Outcomes for Diverse Subpopulations
- State Medicaid Focus on Health Equity and Social Determinants of Health
- Role of Community Health Workers and Peer Support in Health Equity
- Budgeting and Policy Development with a Health Equity Lens
- Other

Announcement re: Attorney General Healey’s “Building Toward Racial Justice and Equity in Health” Forum/Report

On November 16th, Attorney General Maura Healey convened a web-event and issued a new report: [Building Toward Racial Justice and Equity in Health: A Call to Action](#). The report, [presentation](#), and the [recording](#) are posted on the AG’s website and youtube site (and were circulated to Task Force Members).

The report calls for action in five domains:

- data for identifying and addressing health disparities,
- equitable distribution of health care resources,
- telehealth as a tool for expanding equitable access to care,
- health care workforce diversity, and
- social determinants of health and root causes of health inequities.

The thoughtful panel discussion included Task Force Member Dr. Robinson. AG also established an [AG's Advisory Council on Racial Justice and Equity](#), on which Dr. Minter-Jordan and Michael Curry serve.

Discussion of Updates relative to Interim Report

- Discussion of Updates relative to Interim Report approved on October 14 & the State Budget/Policy Process this Fall
- House Concluded and Senate Currently Deliberating FY21 State Budget
- Senate Budget includes Equitable Vaccine Distribution and Process, Investments in Local Boards of Health, and Cash Assistance for populations not eligible for other emergency relief, drawn from Interim Report
- Both budgets include important investments in the social factors in health (housing, food, etc.) noted in Interim Report
- Senate currently has a number of COVID-19 and Equity-related budget amendments pending

Discussion of Next Steps

- Objectives of Task Force toward Final Report & Resources
- 2 Public Hearings (scheduling may conform to resources)
- Future Presentations to Task Force under consideration
(inventory of ideas to-date below):
 - Equitable Vaccine Development and Process
 - Racial and Ethnic Disparities Data/Initiatives
 - Additional thought leaders
 - Follow-ups from NASHP Presentation
 - Any Follow-up from Attorney General's Report

Already Scheduled Meetings (10:30 AM - Noon):

- December 2 and 16